

**OFFICE OF THE CITY COUNCIL**

117 WEST DUVAL STREET, SUITE 425

4TH FLOOR, CITY HALL

JACKSONVILLE, FLORIDA 32202

904-630-1377

**Finance Committee Special Meeting Minutes**

 **July 23, 2018**

**9:30 a.m.**

**Topic:** Tentative millage rate recommendation

**Location:** City Council Chamber, 1st floor, City Hall – St. James Building, 117 West Duval Street

**In attendance:** Council Members Greg Anderson (Chair), Lori Boyer, Reginald Gaffney, Bill Gulliford, Joyce Morgan, Sam Newby

**Excused**: Council Member Jim Love

**Also**: Council Members Aaron Bowman, Ju’Coby Pittman, Scott Wilson, Tommy Hazouri, Al Ferraro; Kyle Billy, Kim Taylor and Phillip Peterson – Council Auditor’s Office; Peggy Sidman– Office of General Counsel; Jeff Clements – Council Research Division; Adri Segui – Legislative Services Division; Jordan Elsbury and Leeann Krieg – Mayor’s Office; Mike Weinstein and Angela Moyer – Finance and Administration Department

**Meeting Convened**: 9:41 a.m.

Chairman Anderson called the meeting to order after the conclusion of the City Council’s special meeting to hear the mayor’s budget address and the attendees introduced themselves for the record.

Mike Weinstein, Director of Finance and Administration, said that the budget proposes the same millage rates as last year which will produce an additional $46 million for the General Fund in the next year fiscal year. Council Auditor Kyle Billy reported that Ordinance 2018-500 will be introduced at City Council tomorrow night for first reading emergency approval to notify the Property Appraiser of the tentative and rolled-back millage rates for publication as required by state law. The tentative millage rate is the maximum that can be levied without re-advertising a higher rate to all property owners, which takes time and costs more than $200,000 for mailings. Mr. Billy noted that a Constitutional amendment approving a third $25,000 homestead exemption will be on the ballot in the fall election which, if approved, will not impact the FY18-19 budget but would apply to the FY19-20 budget. Council Member Hazouri asked about how major changes in programming and personnel in the budget will be communicated to the Council.

Deputy General Counsel Peggy Sidman outlined the 10 budget-related bills covering the millage levies, budget, Capital Improvement Program, UF Health indigent care agreement, Information Technologies CIP, sales tax growth estimate, and 2 bills pulling out specific items from the budget for council members to vote on separately because of business conflicts of interest that would cause two members to have to abstain from voting on the full budget.

President Bowman asked the committee to focus more on the budget and less on policy issues during its work. He thanked the group in advance for their upcoming hard work.

**Motion** (Morgan): the Finance Committee recommends that 2015-500 be approved as submitted by the Mayor with millage rates reflecting the same proposed rates for FY18-19 as adopted for FY17-18 -

Council Member Boyer noted that this is the first year in her memory that the Council Auditor has not recommended increasing the mayor’s proposed millage rate by at least a bit when approving the tentative millage rate to give the Council the ability to consider possible spending increases without the need to re-advertise a higher millage rate later in the budget process. She is concerned that the impending vote on the additional homestead exemption, which could cost Jacksonville $27 million in the FY19-20 budget, could counteract the effort that is finally being made to invest in Jacksonville’s future after many years without such investment. She urged the council members who will be in office beyond 2019 to be advocates for continued investment in services and capital projects and cautioned that the approval of the additional exemption will cripple the progress that is just starting to be made. Council Member Gulliford noted that currently serving council members have suffered through some difficult budget years and face that potential again if the additional homestead exemption is approved as most people expect.

The Morgan motion was **approved unanimously** by voice vote.

**Meeting Adjourned**: 10:04 a.m.

Minutes: Jeff Clements, Council Research

 7.23.18 Posted 2:45 p.m.

Tapes: Finance Special Meeting– LSD

 7.23.18